



**Public Hearing Testimony of
Scott Jackson, Commissioner
Department of Labor
Labor and Public Employees Committee
March 8, 2018**

Good Afternoon Senator Gomes, Senator Miner, Representative Porter, Representative Bocchino and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with testimony regarding **Senate Bill No. 15, AAC Fair and Equal Pay for Equal Work and Equity in the Workplace** and **House Bill No. 5386, AAC Various Pay Equity and Fairness Matters**. My name is Scott Jackson and I am the Commissioner of the Department of Labor.

As the Labor Commissioner, I am pleased to speak in support of another legislative proposal that would address pay equity and fairness. Employees should be paid according to their know-how and their skill, not their gender or their race. Connecticut women on average still only earn 82 cents for every dollar that a man makes. For women of color, the difference is even more alarming. Connecticut should encourage employers to base salaries on the qualifications of an applicant, the demands of a particular job, and the value of that position in the marketplace – not on how much someone was previously paid.

H.B.# 5386 is very similar to S.B.# 15: AAC Fair and Equal Pay for Equal Work and Equity in the Workplace and also deserves your support. However, I would like to bring to your attention that **Section 2** of this bill is unnecessary and should be deleted because current law already protects the seniority of a woman out on pregnancy leave. Specifically, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) under CGS # 31-51nn has a clear provision protecting the seniority of any employee who utilizes FMLA leave. Further, CHRO has a specific statute that protects the seniority of a woman who is on pregnancy leave.

“Equal pay for equal work” is a matter of fairness that we should all strive to achieve.

The Department of Labor stands ready to work with legislature and the Governor’s Office on this very important piece of legislation. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this legislation.